



Welcome to WAAFA's E-newsletter!

Winchester Area Access for All (WAAFA) is a forum dedicated to improving access and conditions for vulnerable people and those with disability in and around Winchester, Hampshire, UK.

This is our E-newsletter highlighting what the forum has been covering over recent months and advertising any relevant events or information. If you would like to add anything to this E-newsletter, please email: info@waafa.org.uk

Winchester Good Accessibility Awards - Phase II



The Winchester Good Accessibility Scheme conducted by WAAFA is in full swing. Phase 2 is nearing completion with the Awards Ceremony hosted by the Mayor of Winchester, Cllr Eileen Berry, set for Monday 13th April 2015 at 6pm. Please note due to limited capacity, attendance is restricted to winners and WAAFA members only.

We still urgently require volunteers for completing Phase 3 shops, businesses and premises and Phase B (which include gyms, restaurants, cafe's etc.).

If you feel you are able to help with completing a survey, please contact us at info@waafa.org.uk or alternatively hard copies can be collected and dropped off at Shopmobility, Upper Parking, Books Shopping Centre, Winchester.

Many thanks to all our volunteers for their hard work and support in the scheme!

WAAFA Event - Information Day 2015



Save the date for your diaries; WAAFA will be hosting an Information Day in 2015!

Saturday, 25 April 2015

10.15am (Arrival) for 10.30am (Start) - 12.45pm (End)

@ The Discovery Centre (Library), Jewry Street, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8SB
(Performance Hall)

Guest speakers and presentations include: Citizen's Advice Bureau, Jobcentre Disabilities Advisor and Hampshire Healthwatch + Exhibition Stalls and Information Stands

Please R.S.V.P attendance to info@waafa.org.uk
or call 01962 855 016 - Keith Hatter, Chair

Programme for the day:

10.15am - Arrival and Registration

10.30am - Start (Welcome & Introduction)

11am - Talk & Presentation 1 by Citizen's Advice Bureau

11.20am - Talk & Presentation 2 by Jobcentre Disabilities Advisor

11.40am - Talk & Presentation 3 by Hampshire Healthwatch

12.00pm - Question & Answer Panel

12.30pm - Opportunity for networking and visiting information stands

12.45pm – End

Stop, Listen, Feel, Go!

Radix Traffic Revealed as the Makers of the Secret Rotating Cone



Crossing the road is always hazardous, much more so for the blind and the visually impaired. Not everybody knows that most of today's signalized pedestrian crossings include a small rotating cone to indicate to those who can't see the Green Man that it is safe to cross the road. This cone, officially called Rotating Cone Tactile equipment is manufactured by a Romsey company, Radix Traffic Limited.

Jackie Porter, prospective LibDem MP for Winchester and Keith Hatter, chairman of the Winchester Area Access for All (WAAFA) forum visited Radix Traffic in January, to see how the Tactile Equipment is manufactured. Brian Cherry, Managing Director of Radix, demonstrated to Keith and Jackie the standard cone, and also a new shape cone with a deeper profile which would be easier to feel.



Brian also showed the manufacturing area, and explained the importance of 100% testing of such safety critical device. Many thousands of these tactile cones are installed in the UK every year, and they almost never go wrong. The reputation of Radix Traffic has been built on quality and reliability, and in order to keep it that way, all the electronic and mechanical parts are made locally or sourced from highly reputable European companies.

There is more to the rotating cone than meets the eye. The geared low voltage motor is carefully controlled by patented electronics to ensure correct rotating speed and torque, and to make sure that if, for example, a glove gets caught in the rotation, the pedestrian does not come to any harm.

Brian also demonstrated the latest new product from Radix, an innovative vehicle detector which senses the local disturbance of the Earth's magnetic field. When a car or other vehicle passes in the vicinity of the sensor, a signal is given to the traffic light controller to adjust traffic flow. Brian explained that the big advantage of the Radix magnetometer sensor is that it is not vulnerable to road damage, and can be installed without the need for road closures.

Radix Traffic Limited is a small successful engineering company, established some 27 years ago by two friends and engineers. Today it supplies major traffic companies, local authorities and consultants with a range of traffic control products. In the industry, the name Radix has become synonymous with the rotating cone.

Radix Traffic Limited, D3 Premier Centre, Abbey Park, Romsey, SO51 9DG

Contact: Brian Cherry, Managing Director

Tel: 01794 511 388

Email: cherryb@radixtraffic.co.uk

Winchester Talking Newspaper A Lifeline for the Visually Impaired



What does your local newspaper mean to you? Perhaps it's where you get your local news. Or how you look for a house, car or job. Possibly it's a regular source of What's On. Maybe it's the controversial topics aired on the letters page that keeps you hooked or you may like to read items of historical interest.

Whatever your newspaper means to you, a Talking Newspaper probably means the same to someone who is blind or partially sighted.

Winchester Talking Newspaper (WTN) is a digest of news, information and features, taken from the Hampshire Chronicle, which is collated and then recorded by a group of volunteers. These recordings are made courtesy of the Chronicle editor, Keith Redbourn and we have been operating since 1990. We also record a monthly magazine, which is a miscellany of articles chosen from other popular publications.

On Thursdays, volunteer editors meet to select the items of news and other items of interest which will be recorded. On Friday morning, in our studio in Chesil Street, a presenter and three readers make a recording of the chosen items. The recording is copied onto memory sticks and sent by post to the 100 or so sight impaired listeners on our mailing list, using the freepost "Articles for the Blind" concession provided by Royal Mail. The memory sticks usually arrive at our listeners' homes on Saturday morning.

Every listener is given, free of charge, an easy-to-use MP3 player on which to listen to the recordings. However, some listeners prefer to access the recordings via a website download facility.

Having listened to the recording, the listeners return their memory sticks in the self-seal postal wallets and the process starts all over again – the ultimate in recycling.

The service is completely free to listeners (funded by voluntary donations) and we take the welfare of our listeners very seriously; we never forget that we have a duty of care to them. In fact, our system of checking the postal wallets in and out will tell us if we need to be concerned because a listener hasn't returned a wallet for more than two weeks. In such a case we contact the listener to check that all is well.

A highlight of the WTN year is the AGM, held typically in April or May. This event, usually attended by the Mayor or Deputy Mayor of Winchester, is an ideal opportunity for volunteers (there are 80 of us) and listeners to get together, catch up on news and, of course, enjoy afternoon tea. There is always a guest speaker. In 2012 we had Tom McNulty from The Macular Society; last year it was Adam Knott, a 2012 Paralympian; and this May it was Malcolm Wells MBE, the national speaker for Canine Partners. Inspiring and entertaining speakers, all.

For those who are socially isolated as a result of their disability, WTN is regarded as a lifeline. "It's like a group of friends coming through the letterbox, to tell me what's going on in my community," said one grateful listener.

Another WTN listener who lost his sight about ten years ago to the inherited retinal dystrophy Retinitis Pigmentosa, by Saturday morning, is looking forward to hearing the familiar sound of the talking newspaper, in its plastic wallet, hitting the doormat.

"There is no way I can read a newspaper," he says. "It's imperative to have the local news, so I do look forward to it. I need the talking newspaper not only for the general news but also because, as a visually impaired person, I get to know about things going on in the town, like major road works, or things that are likely to cause obstructions. For a sight impaired person, that's probably more important than for sighted people."

Listener numbers are slightly in decline and this is the pattern across the UK. A lot more people are computer literate today and can access their news online. Additionally, advances in medical science mean that fewer people are losing their sight.

Nevertheless, demand for WTN's recordings remains strong. Besides, as chairman John Richards says: "As long as there is one listener in Winchester who will benefit, we will keep going."

If you know of someone who would like to receive the Winchester Talking Newspaper (WTN), please telephone WTN's chairman, John Richards, on 02380 732888; e-mail him at jprich@tiscali.co.uk; or write to him at Chesil House, Chesil Street, Winchester SO23 0HU.

You can find out more about Winchester Talking Newspaper on our website www.winchestertalkingnews.com

Touch Tours at Southampton Art Gallery



Southampton City Art Gallery has been running bimonthly Touch Tours for over 15 years to enable people with visual impairments to continue or develop an interest in art. The friendly and informal sessions allow participants to generate and share ideas about art through touch, description and discussion.

A 'hands-on' approach to interpreting and appreciating the art is central to the sessions; this is both insightful and advantageous since so much detail is missed through experiencing the art through looking alone.

In 2013, Touch Tour members held an exhibition entitled 'See What You Miss' in the Art Gallery. The exhibition comprised interpretations of and responses to artworks chosen from the gallery's permanent collection, which were displayed along with the original art pieces.

The Touch tours take place on a Friday morning once every two months, usually at the Art gallery and occasionally at the Tudor House and Seacity museums in Southampton. For more information, including the dates of the sessions, call 02380 832 810.

Accessible Boating



Madam Butterfly and Dawn

Canal boats gently cruise the Basingstoke Canal from Odiham in Hampshire from spring to autumn. A short trip takes them to Odiham Castle, a longer one to Woking, in Surrey. The passengers enjoy the bucolic, watery ambience in all weathers, watching the wild life and taking respite from daily life. Customers love these breaks. Their expressions convey it.

The boats, Madam Butterfly and Dawn, belong to the charity Accessible Boating and are built to accommodate wheelchair users or those with limited mobility, and their carers. Madam Butterfly is a residential boat usually hired for three to seven days, and Dawn is a day boat normally used for two to four hour trips.

The boats have step-free access from the quayside onto a large back deck and a lift to gain access to the cabin. Dawn can take up to six wheelchair users and their carers and is fitted with a fully accessible toilet. Our self-drive boat, Madam Butterfly, is fitted with hydraulic steering, allowing the wheelchair user to steer the boat and become an active member of the crew. The boat is also fitted with accessible toilet and shower and a hospital bed with a hoist. Madam Butterfly can sleep up to seven people. We are happy to provide a trained driver for you at no extra cost.

If you would like to know more about the boats, visit our website

<http://www.accessibleboating.org.uk/> OR ring our bookings manager on 01252-622520

WAAFA Meeting Dates 2015



All meetings will be taking place at:

Winchester Discovery Centre (Library) - Winchester GOLD Offices

Jewry Street, Winchester, Hants, SO23 8SB

(Please ask at reception if you are unsure where the Winchester GOLD offices are)

Every third Thursday of the month from 11.30am - 1.30pm

16th April, 21st May, 18th June, 16th July, 17th September, 15th October
and 19th November 2015

For any items for the Agenda or to be circulated the minutes of the meeting to,
please email info@waafa.org.uk

To subscribe for receiving these newsletters; please visit our website at www.waafa.org.uk

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